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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	Hungary	REPORT NO.	
SUBJECT	Infantry Field Training of University Students	DATE DISTR.	31 August 1953
	25X1A	NO. OF PAGES	5
DATE OF INFO.		REQUIREMENT NO.	
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES	25X1A

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THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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SOURCE:

1. The First University Infantry Battalion consisted of 500 men. It was subdivided into four companies of 120-150 men each. Each company had three platoons of 40 men each, and each platoon had three squads of 13-14 men each.

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Infantry Field Training at Keszthely in the Summer of 1951.

2.

3. About 70 green canvas tents were set up for the training Battalion in the park of the castle of former Count Festetics. Each tent held a squad, i.e. 13-14 men, although the tents were designed to hold 10 men. The Battalion commander had a separate tent. Officers' tents held two persons. Toilet facilities consisted of a crude trench 20 m. long and about 2 m. deep, located about 100 m. from the tents. Neither lime nor any kind of insecticide was used in this ditch, but the men were instructed to sprinkle earth over it. The soldiers were dirty because there were not enough bathing facilities. Otherwise, the camp itself was kept clean and orderly. We even had to pick up leaves, although the camp was situated among trees.

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4. Our mess was in the castle itself, in which some 100 regular soldiers were stationed to train the recruits. I do not know what command they were under, but the contingent included cooks, guards, transportation and sanitation units. There was also a larger contingent unknown designation stationed in the castle, but most of the men were out training recruits during the summer and lived in the castle only in the winter. The castle was a three-storied building with a frontage of about 100 m. and two wings 40 x 20 m. on the ends at right angles to the front, enclosing a courtyard. The castle had about 100 rooms.
5. Regular soldiers guarded a storage building containing small arms of all types which was located in a large one-story barn near the castle. There were some horses in the stables, located in a smaller one-story building closer to the castle, about five or six antitank guns up to 75 mm. caliber, and about 20 3½-ton Csepel trucks. There were no tanks.
6. The soldiers at Keszthely were treated roughly. The doctor would not excuse soldiers from duty even if they sprained their ankles. There was no music for either training purposes or pleasure.
7. Food was poor at the Keszthely camp. Soldiers were hungry all the time. They stole bread from the storehouse whenever they had a chance. Food consisted of the following:
 - a. Breakfast: 20 decagrams of dark bread.
2-3 deciliters of black coffee or very poor soup with noodles. On Sundays, also 10 dkg. of bacon or 10 dkg. of jam.
 - b. Lunch: Soup with noodles.
Some vegetable dish-potatoes, cabbage, noodles with sugar, farina or poppy seed.
Four times a week some got a dish with a little meat mixed in it.
20 dkg. of brown bread.
 - c. Dinner: Coffee or soup with noodles.
20 dkg. of bread.
10 dkg. of bacon or jam.
8. The day we arrived we were issued the following articles of clothing and equipment:
 - a. One set of underwear, which was turned in for washing once a week.
 - b. Two pairs of foot wrappers, changed once a week.
 - c. One blouse, Russian style (gimnastorka).
 - d. One cap (pilotka). No steel helmets were issued.
 - e. One wide leather belt.
 - f. One pair of rubber boots. These boots hurt the feet of the soldiers and the officers blamed it on sabotage. Toward the end of the training we got new boots.
 - g. Two bed sheets.
 - h. One woolen blanket.
 - i. One rifle, Russian type, with long fluted bayonet. (This was the only item for which we had to sign.)
 - j. Rifle cleaning equipment-a bar, some rags, and pieces of wood.

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- k. Two leather ammunition bags, each holding about 15 rounds.
 - l. One short infantry spade.
 - m. One army knapsack.
 - n. One mess kit with a spoon. We got no forks or knives.
 - o. Sergeants and above got pistols -- M-48 models, 7.65 caliber, which held eight rounds of ammunition.
 - p. One new gas mask was issued per whole squad. It was designed to fit the face, and had a tube with a round box at the end of it. I do not recall other details.
9. Our daily routine in the training camp was as follows:
- 0500 Reveille
 - 0510-0530 Morning gymnastics
 - 0530-0600 Cleaning the tent and washing
 - 0600-0630 Breakfast
 - 0645-0700 Formation and reading of daily orders
 - 0700-1300 Marching to exercise field which was located five kilometers from the camp in hilly countryside. No vehicles were used on marches. During the exercises, which were both theoretical and practical, we were given a 10-minute rest period every hour.
 - 1300-1330 Lunch
 - 1330-1500 Rest period. However, this was never used as such because we often returned from the exercise field at 1400 hours.
 - 1500-1700 Attack and defense exercises in a nearby swampy field.
 - 1700-1800 Cleaning of arms
 - 1800-1900 Rest period. Here again we were never allowed to rest. We always had something else to do.
 - 1900-1930 Dinner
 - 1930-2200 Free period, often taken up with talks and discussions.
 - 2200 Taps.
10. We spent Saturday mornings in the camp cleaning tents. There were no exercises on Sundays. Some Communists got passes to town for the afternoon from 1500 to 2200 hours. The rest did not get passes at all.
11. Two or three times a week we had combat alarms at night. This exercise consisted in getting ready by squad and company in 20 minutes. The battalion had to get ready in 30 minutes in full equipment. On one or two occasions we marched a short distance at night. Once we marched the whole night returning to the camp in the morning. We got no rations.
12. Instruction was given in Hungarian only, by Hungarian officers. ~~Nothing~~ had nothing to do with training. Instruction included such things as description and demonstration of arms, defense and attack with rifles and bayonets, various commands, shooting with pistol and rifle, protection from explosives, learning to compute how much dynamite would be needed to blast specific objects, e.g. a tree, a wall, etc.

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13. In addition, we had four hours weekly, on Mondays and Fridays, of political indoctrination lectures. These lectures dealt with glorification of the Hungarian Army, praise of RAKOSI, praise of Marxism, and the Soviet Army and its accomplishments in World War II.
14. We had only one shooting practice on the training field, located about five kilometers from the camp and about one square kilometer in size. It had no mechanical devices -- only trenches five or six feet deep. We shot at flat wooden figures in the form of men which were held in fixed positions by a soldier in the trench. The figures were inscribed "Truman" or "Tito" or "Churchill". Each figure was marked with several concentric circles numbered from 10 in the center to one on the periphery. The grades for target shooting were: "Excellent", for a score of 27-30 points, "Good", for a score from 20-27 points, and "Satisfactory", for a score from 15-20 points. Each soldier shot four rounds with the rifle, three rounds with the pistol, five rounds with automatic pistol, three rounds with automatic rifle. Those who missed were given more rounds until they hit the target. Every squad had two or three "excellent" shooters. On the whole Hungarian soldiers are good shots.
15. Grenade practice consisted of throwing wooden grenades, not real ones.
16. There were only a few gas masks which were worn in turn by different men. The whole practice with gas masks consisted of marching a few yards with the mask on the face.
17. Political officers were in each unit from battalion down to company level. The political officer in my company was Second Lieutenant (fnu) LOVAS. Each platoon and squad had one political trustee. 25X1
18. [REDACTED]
19. [REDACTED]
20. I do not recall the name of the company commander.
21. Once a Soviet officer came to inspect the camp. We did not see him because we were sent to exercise, but we were told about it by the regular soldiers in the castle.
22. I recall the following Army salaries. (All political officers and political trustees received higher salaries.)

private	60 forints per month
private first class	75 forints per month
corporal	90 forints per month
sergeant	100 forints per month
senior sergeant	600 forints per month
staff sergeant	700 forints per month
master sergeant	800 forints per month
warrant officer (alhadnagy)	1,100 forints per month
second lieutenant	1,200 forints per month
first lieutenant	1,300 forints per month
captain	1,500 forints per month
major	1,800 forints per month (I guess)

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23. After the end of the school year in 1952 I was ordered to spend from 23 July to 23 August in training at a large Army camp situated in the flat, forested region at Doboz, about 10 km. from Békéscsaba /4639N-2105E/. About 20,000 troops were located at this camp at that time, including a complete division (I do not recall the designation), a platoon of women students of medicine and pharmacy, in addition to two university battalions. There were no barracks or other military buildings there. All personnel were housed in tents holding a squad each. 25X1

24.

25. This camp was poorly organized as far as we were concerned. The kitchen was located one kilometer from our camp in the division's camp. Often I did not bother to go to get food. Sanitation was poor. A dysentery epidemic broke out among the soldiers. The authorities blamed the epidemic on the packages of food which the soldiers received from their homes, and consequently all packages were collected and burned. Sick soldiers were taken to the Szeged Military Hospital. Many were taken care of by the field ambulance of the division, which had nurses from the Sport Hospital attached to it. Food was better at [] than at []. We got meat four times a week for lunch and dinner, (each time five decagrams). There was also a canteen in which we could buy additional food. The morale of the university troops was at best indifferent, with the exception of a small number of convinced Communists. 25X1X

26. The organization of the battalion and the daily routine were the same as at [] the training was more intensive. The training field was located about two kilometers from the camp. We had no machine gun practice shooting. Our target shooting practice consisted of shooting from a prone position at a moving target which was otherwise like the targets used at []. We had only one shooting practice with the following arms: 25X1

- 4 rounds for rifle
- 3 rounds for pistol
- 5 rounds for automatic pistol
- 3 rounds for automatic rifle.

27. On one occasion our battalion had a two-day march of 50 km. with full equipment. I did not participate []. The battalion was followed by a field kitchen on a truck. I do not know of special rations for soldiers. 25X1

25X1X 28. [] we attended lectures on such subjects as infiltration, crawling under barbed wire, how to avoid mines, and wire-sapping methods which made way for the infantry through wire obstacles and mine fields.

29. Soviet officers and advisers visited this camp twice during my stay there, but there were no Soviet officers stationed at the camp. All training and commands were given in the Hungarian language.

25X1X 30. [] there I saw from a distance of about 30 m. five or six Soviet tanks of the T-50 and T-34 types at the camp. They were enormous and covered with canvas. [] antitank guns and armored cars. 25X1X

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